that their southern neighbors make particularly nice necklaces. Also the meeting of the two groups, when it can take place in a peaceful manner, has as a consequence a series of reciprocal presents. The always impending conflict gives way to a market. This has some very remarkable characteristics in the sense that if one regards the presents only as presents, they do not bring any thanks nor proof of satisfaction. And if one considers them exchanges, they are effected without any bargaining, attempts to set the value of the article, depreciation, or manifestation of disagreement between the parties. Truthfully, they take pains not to admit that there are exchanges going on. Each goes about his usual occupations, and the objects or products go from one to the other, without the one who gives making note of the gesture by which he hands over his present, and without the one who receives paying any attention to his new wealth. In this way are exchanged husked cotton and balls of thread; blocks of wax or resin; urucu paste; shells, earrings, bracelets and necklaces; tobacco and seeds; feathers and sticks of bamboo destined for making arrow points; skeins of palm fibers, porcupine quills; whole pots or broken pottery; gourds. This mysterious circulation of merchandise goes on without haste for a half day or a whole day, after which the groups separate, and each one takes inventory of what he has received, and remembers what he has given. Thus, as regards the equity of the transactions, the Nambikwara trust entirely, the generosity of the partner. The idea that one might estimate, discuss or bargain, demand or take back is entirely foreign to them. We had promised an Indian a hunting sword as the price of transporting a message to a neighboring group. The commission was done, but upon the return of the messenger we had neglected, occupied by other cares, to give him immediately the agreed upon recompense, thinking that he himself would come to get it. He did nothing, and the next day we could not find him. He had left, very irritated his companions told us, and we did not [94] see him again. We were forced to entrust the present to another Indian. Under these conditions, it is not surprising that when the exchanges are finished, one of the groups departs discontented with its lot and, while taking inventory of its acquisitions and recalling its own presents, accumulates bitterness for weeks or months, which become greater and greater and more aggressive.

It seems that wars very often have no other origin. Naturally other causes exist, such as a murder or carrying off women, depending on whether one desires to take the initiative, or whether one wishes to avenge a preceding attack; but it does not seem that a band feels

collectively obliged to make reprisals for an injury done one of its members. Much more often, given the very lively and permanent animosity which reigns between the groups, these pretexts good for exciting the spirit are voluntarily entertained, especially if they feel strong either because of the importance of the group's strength or because of an alliance with neighboring bands against a common enemy, concluded by the intermediary of messengers acting as ambassadors. The proposition of war is presented by an exalted individual or one who exposes before his companions his particular griefs, in the same tone and style that speeches were made at the encounter.

39. ẽ̃ akinãẽ̃ ẑednãẽ̃ ỹõdegãẽ̃ kakonʔẽ̃ ordnʔẽ̃ ỹalaurîẽnʔẽ̃ (b1) whose approximate sense is: "Hello! Come here! Let's go! I am irritated! very irritated! arrows! big arrows!" The Indians become so excited upon the occasion of these epic speeches that it is not possible to obtain the commentary of the formula except well after they have been cited and undoubtedly very unfaithfully. But war is not a matter of purely profane decision. It necessitates a preliminary ceremony which will determine if the signs are favorable or not. Dressed in special attire, tufts of buriti straw dappled with red, hoods of jaguar skin, the men assemble under the leadership of the chief and execute the special dance and chant of war. (1) A divining rite

1. Dances and music will be the object of a special publication.

is then performed. The chief, or the sorcerer in the groups where he exists, goes solemnly to hide an arrow in a corner of the bush. The arrow is retrieved the next day. If it is covered with blood, the expedition is undertaken, if not, it is given up. (2) Many warlike

2. This symbolic use of an arrow seems typical of cultures situated north of the Amazon. The fact is interesting, given the northern affinities of the Nambikwara language. Concerning the use of the arrow as the message of war, cf. Roth, "An inquiry," etc., Annual report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 30, p. 362; Koch-Grünberg, Zwei Jahre unter den Indianern, etc., Berlin, 1910, Vol. II, p. 316; Gumilla, Historia Natural del Rio Orinoco, Barcelona, 1791, Vol. I, p. 134.

expeditions thus begun end after several kilometers of marching.

2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
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tainship is not hereditary; the chief, when old or sick, designates his successor from the ablest men of the group. The chief's authority is slight; it depends wholly on the good will of the family heads.

Relations between neighboring bands are inspired both by fear and by the desire to exchange goods. Warfare, therefore, is closely connected with barter. Groups not acquainted with each other use ritual speech when they meet.

Before starting a war expedition, a divinatory rite is performed with special songs and dances. An arrow is hidden by the shaman, the outcome of the expedition being pressaged by its appearance the following day.

LIFE CYCLE

Childbirth.—After the delivery of a child, the placenta is buried in the bush and both parents are subjected to rigid prohibitions concerning food, the use of ornaments, and social contacts.

Puberty.—The initiation rite for young men consists of piercing their lips and nose and giving them their adult personal name. At her first menstruation, a girl is isolated for several months in a special shelter outside the village, where she is given ritual food by her mother. At the end of the rite, she takes a long bath in the river; this also constitutes the first step of the marriage ceremony.

Both cross-cousin and avuncular marriages (see p. 367), are often planned by parents for their infant children. Marriage is celebrated by festivals, banquets, and dances. The union is pronounced by the chief. Fish and fishing are important both before and during the ceremony.

Separation is frequent, the chief cause being that the man seeks a younger and prettier woman. There is no social sanction of adultery, except that the seducer is advised by his companion to go away for a while so as to avoid the husband's revenge. A murderer also flees vengeance.

Death.—Some groups of *Nambicuara* bury their dead in a circular pit, the corpse being placed in a crouching position. Others leave the corpse to decompose in an elongated ditch and later wash the bones in the river, put them in a basket, and bury them in the village, which is then abandoned. Weapons, implements, adornments, and other property of the deceased are destroyed, but his garden—if he owned one—is abandoned only for a few months. Later anybody may cultivate it.

ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Art.—Most *Nambicuara* groups are completely ignorant of drawing, although some groups decorate calabashes with dots and straight and sinuous lines. These are conventionalized reproductions of realistic designs found among other groups.